

Getahun at Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County Health Careers for All (HCA)

Getahun came to the U.S. in the diversity lottery program from Ethiopia on June 13, 2011, with his wife and three children. In Ethiopia, Getahun had worked as a general secretary. Upon his arrival to the U.S., he and his family struggled a lot in adjusting to the new lifestyle and faced serious housing challenges. They were homeless and living with friends at first, then moved to a shelter in downtown Seattle for five months, and were receiving TANF cash assistance.

Getahun was determined to get any skill training to find employment. He was motivated to join the healthcare field as he saw opportunities for employment and career advancement. With the career counseling and guidance of an HCA healthcare navigator, Getahun chose to become a Nursing Assistant–Certified (NA-C) to start his career in healthcare. He enrolled in the HCA program in August 2011, supported by the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) funded by the Administration for Children and Families' Office of Family Assistance, and completed NA-C training in October 2011.

In February 2012, Getahun obtained his state license and started full-time employment as an NA-C at a long-term care facility. In March 2012, the family secured housing with Wellspring Family Services and was able to move off of TANF. Getahun says that he is grateful for the opportunity to get the NA-C training, to find employment, and to be able to provide for his family.

**Yukarie at Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County
Health Careers for All (HCA)**

Yukarie Harrison was excited about the possibilities presented to her in the Medical Business Information Technology (MBIT) training and had well-considered plans for her future. However, she had a questionable prospect for training completion and subsequent employment. She was 22 years old at the time of enrollment, had a family background of long-term reliance on TANF, marginal CASAS scores, and a scattered work history. She also struggled to adopt a professional demeanor. Her mother's chronic illness had required her to withdraw from several training programs to care for younger siblings. To her credit, she continued to seek training opportunities.

In the final days of the MBIT pre-training, Yukarie engaged in an intense verbal altercation with another student over a minor issue that almost cost her place in the MBIT class. Her entrance scores were just adequate. She was admitted, but issues about professionalism (such as reacting to the constant student gossiping) continued through the first quarter. The dedicated and engaged team of instructors voiced their concern. When the team members spoke with her, she listened and said she wanted to improve. Her academic progress continued.

At the end of the first quarter, Yukarie showed her transformation in her response to an incident that began when a person in the classroom insulted her during her final presentation. She continued her report without reacting to the insult. She completed the first quarter work (the provocateur was asked not to return for the second quarter).

Her second quarter internship placement was with a local senior services organization. It proved to be a difficult assignment and included interaction with at least one abusive, potentially dangerous client at the organization. Yukarie was miserable, but decided to stay and not accept her internship instructor's offer to move her. At the celebration luncheon at the end of class, she talked about her decision to complete her internship at the senior services organization despite the obstacles. She agreed when one of her classmates candidly offered that the experience was exactly what she needed.

Two weeks after her internship ended, Yukarie was offered the position of Donation Coordination Assistant at the organization, working in a different department, under a different supervisor. This was a part-time, temporary position, but after successfully completing two months on the job she was offered and accepted a full-time permanent position with benefits and has received at least one significant raise in the six months since. She's decided to continue training, with HCA's assistance, in the healthcare field.